

SECOND EDITION.

DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES

ILLUSTRATED.

PART THE SECOND.

4.

CONTAINING

AN

INSTRUCTIVE ESSAY,

TRACING

ALL THE HORRORS

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

TO THEIR REAL CAUSES ;

The LICENTIOUS POLITICS, and INFIDEL
PHILOSOPHY of the Present Age.

BY PETER PORCUPINE.

LONDON :

PRINTED FOR J. WRIGHT, OPPOSITE OLD BOND-
STREET, PICCADILLY ;

1798.

(Price 4d or twelve for 3s 6d.)

ADDRESS TO THE READER.

THE unprecedented sale of the pamphlet entitled "Democratic Principles Illustrated by Example," induces the Editor to offer to the Public, the following work, by the same author, as a SECOND PART to it. It contains an account of the French Revolution, not inferior in merit to any that has been published. The overthrow of the Altar and the Throne in France, must make every friend to Religion and Monarchy in other countries, desirous of ascertaining by what instruments such a system as that which had subsisted in France for centuries, could in so short a space of time be shaken to its very foundation.

We are taught from the following Essay, that these instruments were Confiscation and Murder. In the first Confiscation of the property of the Clergy; the Bankers, the Merchants, the Farmers, the Lawyers, and even some of the Nobility of France concurred. The first Murders were, if not defended, almost universally excused: but how awful and instructive is the example, when we consider that these Bankers, Merchants, Farmers, Lawyers, and Nobles, have all of them been plundered, in their turn; that a great part of them have been murdered; and that such of them as have saved themselves by flight are now living on the charity of other countries.

Let us learn from hence, that civil society cannot exist without the inviolability of private property, and the undistinguished punishment of crimes. He who robs, will in his turn be robbed: he who murders will, in his turn, be murdered: they who introduce this system will be the next sufferers by it; and, if the first revolutionists in France are not deserving of our compassion, what must we think of those who, with the example of France before their eyes, can still persevere in recommending to their own country an imitation of her conduct!



INSTRUCTIVE ESSAY, &c.

THAT the French were an amiable people the whole civilized world has given abundant testimony, by endeavouring to imitate them. There was not a nation in Europe but had, in some degree, adopted their language and their fashions; and individuals, who travelled in their country, were led by an involuntary impulse into an imitation of their manners.

The prominent feature in their national character was, it is true, *levity*; but, though levity and ferociousness may, and often do, meet in the same person, no writer, that I recollect, had ever accused the French of being cruel. If we are to judge of their disposition by their natural sports and entertainments, we shall find no room to draw a conclusion against their humanity. These cruel diversions, where men become the bullies of brute creatures, and laugh at seeing them goad, and bite, and tear each other to pieces, were never known in France. Even in their theatrical performances a dead body was never exhibited on the scene: such a spectacle was thought to be too much for the feelings of the audience. The works of their favourite authors generally breathe the greatest tenderness and humanity. The nation that could produce, and admire a Marmontel and a Racine, could not be naturally bloody-minded.

Whence, then, the mighty, the dreadful change? What is it that has transformed a great portion of this airy, humane people into a horde of sullen assassins? What is it that has converted these thoughtless realms; this gay, sprightly land of mirth, this bright domain, into a gloomy wilderness watered with rivers of human blood? This ought to be the great object of our enquiries: this

ought to fix all our attention. Without determining this point, we can draw no profit from the preceding relation, and without attempting it, I should have undertaken the unpleasant task of holding the French people up to reproach and detestation to no manner of purpose.

It has been asserted, again and again, by the partizans of the French revolution, that all the crimes which have disgraced it, are to be ascribed to the hostile operations of their enemies. They have told us, that, had not the Austrians and Prussians been on their march to Paris, the prisoners would not have been massacred, on the 2d and 3d of September, 1792. But, can we possibly conceive how the murder of eight thousand poor prisoners, locked up and bound, could be necessary to the defence of a capital, containing a million of inhabitants? Can we believe that the sabres of the assassins would not have been more effectually employed against the invaders, than against defenceless priests and women? The deluded populace were told not "to leave the wolves in the fold while they went to attack those that were without." But these wolves, if they were such, were in prison; were under a guard an hundred thousand times as strong as themselves, and could have been destroyed at a moment's warning. There is something so abominably cowardly in this justification, that it is even more base than the crime. Suppose that a hundred thousand men had marched from Paris, to make head against the Austrians and Prussians, there were yet nine hundred thousand left to guard the unhappy wretches that were tied hand and foot. Where could be the necessity of massacring them? Where could be the necessity of hacking them to pieces, tearing out their bowels, and biting their hearts?

Subsequent events have fully proved, that it was not danger that produced these bloody measures: for, we have ever seen the revolutionists most cruel in times of their greatest security. Their butcheries at Lyons and in its neighbourhood did not begin till they were completely triumphant. It was then, at the moment when they had no retaliation to fear, that they commenced their bloody

work. Carrier, lolling at his ease, sent the victims to death by hundreds. The blood never flowed from the guillotine in such torrents, as at the very time when their armies were driving their enemies before them, in every direction.

It has been said in the British House of Commons, that the massacres in France ought to be attributed to the Allied Powers. "You hunt them like wild beasts, and then you complain of them for being ferocious." How this hunting could drive the French to butcher one another, I cannot see; but if it was a justifiable reason for them, it might certainly be applied with much more justice to their enemies; for these have been oftener obliged to fly than the French. The revolutionary armies have over-run an extent of territory equal to one third of their own country: the Savoyards, the Germans, the Flemings, the Dutch, the Spaniards, and the English, have been obliged to fly before them; but we have heard of no massacres among these people. The French most unmercifully put to death eight thousand of their country people, who were in the prisons of Paris; and, as an excuse for this, they tell us that the Duke of Brunswick had invaded the province of Champagne; but they themselves have over-run all the United Netherlands, and even taken possession of the capital; and we have not heard that the Dutch have, as yet, been guilty of a single massacre. They have found but one place, in all their career, where the people could be prevailed on to erect a guillotine, and that was at Geneva. Here their army was more numerous than the whole population of the state, and therefore their system was fully adopted; yet, even here, among this little debased and tyrannized people, there were to be found no villains infamous enough to imitate their masters in murdering women and children. That was a species of slaughter reserved for the French nation alone.

The French revolution has been compared to that of America, and I have heard some men, calling themselves Americans, who have not been ashamed to say, that as great cruelties were committed in this country as in that.

I would now ask these men, who are so anxious to be thought as bloody as the fans culotte French, if they can give me one instance of the Americans murdering their towns-men at the approach of the enemy? When the British army succeeded that of the Congress at Philadelphia, did the continental troops murder all the Tories before they quitted the City? Can these generous friends of the French revolution tell us of any massacres that took place in that country? Did they ever hear of women and children being drowned and shot by hundreds? Seven years of civil war desolated these states, but the blood of one single woman or child never stained the earth.

If the doctrine be admitted, if a people be justifiable in entering on a series of massacres the instant they are pressed by an enemy from without, what safety can there be for any of us? If a declaration of war is to unsheath the daggers of all the assassins in the community, civil society is the greatest curse that ever fell upon mankind. Much better and safer were it for us to separate, and prowl about like savages, nay like beasts, than to live thus, in continual trepidation, in continual fear for our throats.

There is something so exceedingly cowardly and ridiculous in this justification, that even the French revolutionists are ashamed of it. They have recourse to another still more dishonourable, it is true, but less cowardly. They tell us, that all the assassins in France have been in the pay of Great Britain; or, to make use of their own expression, have been excited to action by the "*gold of Pitt.*"

As I wish to advance nothing without the best possible authority, I shall here insert a passage on this subject, taken from a Gazette published at Philadelphia by one *Gatreau*, and at the press of *Moreau de St. Mery*, who was a member of the constituent assembly of France.

The intention of the piece evidently is to justify the French character, or rather the character of the French revolutionists, by attributing the horrid deeds these latter have

committed, to some other cause than their own dispositions and anarchical principles.

“ What man, enlightened by experience, will now deny, that, from the head of Pitt have come all the crimes which have rendered the Revolution detestable in the eyes of even those who adored its principles ; that, it was English jealousy and hatred that lighted the flames, and sharpened the poignards, which have reduced the finest possessions in the world to a heap of ashes and blood?—What evil genius created the impious, sanguinary, and ambitious factions, that were to annihilate France ; or, at least bend it again beneath the yoke, if Providence had not disconcerted the plans of iniquity?—The infernal genius of the English Minister. It was with the gold, drawn from his victims in India, that he paid for the French blood, which has flowed in rivers at Paris, in the departments, on the frontiers, and in the colonies.”

This is an *important*, and were it not so very hackneyed and thread-bare, I would call it a “ *precious confession*.” Here we see a Frenchman, a partizan of, and perhaps an actor in, the revolution, endeavouring to wipe away the stain on its principles, by ascribing all the horrors those principles have produced, to the gold distributed among the revolutionists by the English minister. The cruelties that have been committed were not, then, necessary to the establishment of a free government ; they were not the effect of irritation, of anarchical confusion, of vindictive retaliation ; they were not the natural consequence of a long oppressed people's breaking their chains and rising on their tyrants ; all these excuses (which I must allow were silly enough) are at once done away by this new justification ; for, we are here told, in so many words, that the French people have shed rivers of each other's blood, in every part of their dominions, purely for the love—not of *liberty*, but of *the gold of Pitt*.

There is such a natural connection between the measures of the several National Assemblies and the massacres that were the immediate consequence of them, that it is

impossible to effect a separation without the utmost violence to all manner of reasoning and truth. If it was the *gold of Pitt* that paid for all the French blood that has been spilled, it must have been that gold that paid for the inhuman murder of Messrs. Launy and Flessel, and it must have been that gold which induced the constituent assembly to sanction the murder, by giving the assassins of these gentlemen the title of *heroes* and *conquerors*, and by instituting a national festival in their honour.

The Revolution was begun, and has hitherto been maintained, by the shedding of innocent blood; therefore, if it was the *gold of Pitt* that paid for that blood, it is to the *gold of Pitt* that the revolution is to be ascribed, and not to that patriotic spirit and love of liberty, with which we have been so long amused. It has been incontestibly proved, that the several National Assemblies authorised or approved of all the massacres which have disgraced their country; if, then, these massacres were paid for by Mr. Pitt, must we not inevitably conclude that the National Assemblies were in the same pay? If Mr. Pitt paid for the blood of the family of Bourbon, for that of the king's guards, of the nobility, the clergy, the bankers, the merchants, in short, of all the rich or aristocrats, as they are called, it was Mr. Pitt who destroyed the monarchy: it was he who caused France to be called a Republic, and who gave rise to the doctrine of equality. Those, therefore, who talk of the *gold of Pitt*, must cease all their fulsome eulogiums on these gallant republicans; for, if they are to have a republic, it will, according to their own confessions, be the work of the English minister.

This vindication, throwing the blame on the *gold of Pitt*, amply participates in the misfortune of all the vindications that have lately appeared amongst us; that is, it takes up a bad cause, and makes it worse. The reader will certainly feel, with me, an inexpressible indignation at a people, who, because an hostile army was on their frontiers, could be prevailed on to butcher thousands upon thousands of their innocent countrymen; who could cut

the throats of their fathers and mothers, rip up the bowels of women with child, and carry about the trophies of their base and savage triumph on the points of their pikes and bayonets ; but what will be his feelings, what will contain his swelling heart, when he is told, that all this was undertaken and perpetrated for foreign gold ? The revolutionists, by accusing Mr. Pitt of being at the bottom of their massacres, do not perceive, without doubt, that they are heaping ten times ten-fold infamy on themselves and their nation.

By alledging this influence of British gold, the writer I have above quoted reduces himself and the partizans of the revolution to a most distressing dilemma. He owns that rivers of French blood have flowed at Paris, in the departments, on the frontiers, and in the colonies ; and he tells us, that this blood was paid for with the gold of Pitt. Now, admitting this to be true, this blood has been shed, and this gold received by *Frenchmen*. To what, then, will our author ascribe this sanguinary avarice ? He must either ascribe it to the *natural disposition* of his countrymen, or, *a change* in that natural disposition, *produced by the revolution*. It is uncertain which of these he may choose, but it is very certain, choose which he will, that he has held up the character of his nation, or the principles of the revolution, to detestation and abhorrence. This is the way he has justified the French in the eyes of the people of this country. Infinitely better were it for such justifiers to suffer the press to rest in eternal inaction. All that a good Frenchman can do, is, to weep over the disgrace of his country ; for, so long as murder, horrid, barbarous, savage murder, shall admit of no excuse, so long shall the actions of the French Revolutionists remain unjustifiable.

It is more than probable, that a writer of this stamp might be willing to allow, that his countrymen were always naturally ferocious and bloody minded, rather than confess that this disposition has been produced by the principles of the revolution : for, patriots of this kind are ever ready to sacrifice the honour of their country to the support

of their systems. But justice demands from us to reject with disdain every such conclusion. We have seen the French people sprightly, beneficent, humane and happy ; let us, now, follow them step by step into the awful opposite, and see for ourselves, by what diabolical means the change has been effected.

The first National Assembly had hardly assumed that title, when they discovered an intention of overturning the government, which had been called together, and which their constituents had enjoined them to support, and of levelling all ranks and distinctions among the different orders in the community. To this they were not led, as it had been so falsely pretended, by their love of liberty and desire of seeing their country happy ; but by envy, cursed envy, that will never let the fiery demagogue sleep in peace, while he sees a greater or richer than himself. It has been objected to this, that there were among the revolutionists men who already enjoyed distinguished honours ; but it is forgotten at the same time, that ambition will be at the top, or no where ; that it will destroy itself with the envied object, rather than act a subaltern part. The motto of a demagogue is that of Milton's Satan : " better to reign in hell than serve in heaven."

This task of destruction, was, however an arduous one. To tear the complicated work of fourteen centuries to pieces at once, to render honours dishonourable, and turn reverential awe into contempt and mockery, was not to be accomplished but by extraordinary means. It was evident that property must change hands, that the best blood of the nation must flow in torrents, or the project must fail. The assembly, to arm the multitude on their side, broached the popular doctrine of *equality*. It was a necessary part of the plan of these reformers to seduce the people to their support ; and such was the credulity of the unfortunate French that they soon began to look on them as the oracles of virtue and wisdom, and believed themselves raised, by one short sentence issued by these ambitious impostors, from the state of *subjects* to that of *sovereigns*.

"I punished" (says Solon, the Athenian law-giver,) "I punished with death all those aspiring disturbers of the common-wealth, who, in order to domineer themselves, and lead the vulgar in their train, pretended that all men were equal, and sought to confound the different ranks in society, by preaching up a chimerical equality, that never did or can exist." How happy would it have been for France, had there been some Solon endued with wisdom and power enough to punish the political mountebanks of the Constituent Assembly! What dreadful carnage, what indelible disgrace, the nation would have escaped! Hardly had the word *equality* been pronounced, when the whole kingdom became a scene of anarchy and confusion. The name of liberty (I say the *name*, for the regenerated French have known nothing of it but the name.) The name of liberty had already half turned the heads of the people, and that of equality finished the work. From the moment it sounded in their ears, all that had formerly inspired respect, all that they had revered and adored, even began to excite contempt and fury. Birth, beauty, old age, all became the victims of a destructive equality, erected into a law by an Assembly of ambitious tyrants, who were ready to destroy every thing that crossed their way to absolute domination.

One of the immediate effects of the promulgation of this doctrine was the murder of Monsieur Foulon and his son-in-law Berthier; who, without so much as being charged with any crime, were taken by the people, conducted to Paris, and cruelly massacred. I will say nothing (says *Du Gour* in his eloquent *Memoire*, page 35) I will say nothing of the savage cruelties committed on Foulon and Berthier; I will not represent the bloody head of the father-in law, offered to the son to kiss, pressed against his lips, and afterwards put under his feet; I will not represent the inhuman assassins rushing on Berthier, tearing out his heart, and placing it, quivering and still palpitating, on the table of the town hall, *before the magistrates* of the commune.—After this their heads were

stuck on pikes, and the heart of Berthier on the point of a sword. In this manner they were carried through the streets, followed by the exulting populace (see *Rabaut's History of the French Revolution*, page 117.) Nor let it be pretended that the Assembly could not prevent this shameful, this bloody deed. They had the absolute command of Paris at the time, and had two hundred thousand armed men ready to obey their nod. But the Assembly never opposed the murder of those whom they looked upon as their enemies; nay, Rabaut, their partial historian (who was one of their body) even justifies the murder.

When the word *equality* found its way to the colonies it was only a signal for assassination. At Port-au-Prince the Chevalier de Mauduit, a brave and generous officer, who rendered essential services to this country during the last war, was murdered by his own soldiers. The villains had the insolence to order him to kneel down before them: "No," said he, like a soldier as he was, "It shall never be said that Thomas Mauduit bent his knee before a set of scoundrels."—His head was cut off; he was torn limb from limb; his bowels were trailed along the street, as butchers do those of beasts in a slaughter-house. The next morning the different members of his body, and morsels of his flesh, were seen strewed about opposite his house, and his bloody and ghastly head placed on the step of the door-way.—We know we have before our eyes the proofs of what havoc, distress, and destruction this detestable world has since produced in the unfortunate island of St. Domingo.

It was now that the sovereign people, entering on their reign, first took the famous plundering motto: "*War to the gentlemen's houses, and peace to the cottage*; or, in other words, *war to all those who have any thing to lose.*" This motto is extremely comprehensive; it includes the whole doctrine of equality. It was not a vain declaration in France; but was put in practice with that patriotic zeal which has marked the whole course of the revolution. To be rich, or of a good family, became a crime, which

was often expiated by the loss of life. Men took as much pains to be thought obscure vagabonds, as they had formerly done to be thought wealthy and of honest descent; and, what distinguishes the French revolution from all others in the world, to have a ragged pair of breeches, or to be totally in want of that so necessary article of dress, was esteemed the surest mark of pure patriotism, and was the greatest recommendation to public favour.

But the National Assembly, though heartily seconded by myriads of ragged populace, knew, however, that they could not long depend upon such a promiscuous support. The citizens were, therefore, to be soldiers at the same time, and placed under the command of the creatures of the Assembly. To this end the territory of the nation underwent a new division, on the levelling plan. The provinces of France were melted down into a rude undigested mass of departments, districts, and municipalities. All the old magistrates were replaced by the vilest wretches that could be found. There were forty four thousand municipalities, each of these had several municipal officers, and each of these latter his troop of revolutionary myrmidons. There could not be less than three millions of men in arms, ready to burn, cut and slay at a moment's warning. Nothing was to be seen or heard but the patrolling of these sons of equality. The Assembly pretended to hold out the olive branch, while they were forming the nation into a camp. The peaceable man trembled for his life. One must have been an eye witness of the change produced by these measures, to have the least idea of it. All was suspicion and dread. The bell that had never rung but to call the peaceful villagers to the altar, was converted to a signal of approaching danger: and the tree, beneath which they formerly danced, became an alarm post. The ragged greasy magistrates, with their municipal troops at their heels, were for ever prowling about for their prey, the property of others. These little platoons of cut throats ranged the country round, crying havock, burning and laying waste wherever they came. They had not yet begun to murder frequently, but it was

of little consequence to a man whether his brains were blowed out or not, after having seen himself and family reduced, in the space of a few hours, from affluence to beggary. A band of these enlightened ruffians went to the *chateau*, or country house of a gentleman in Provence, and demanded that his person should be delivered into their hands. The servants defended the house for some time, but in vain; they advanced to the front door, when the lady of the house appeared with a child in her arms, and endeavoured to pacify them, saying that her husband was gone out at the back door. The ruffians instantly set fire to the house. When the lady perceived this, she confessed that her husband was hidden in one of the garrets. The house was now on fire; she left her child, and rushed through the flames to call her husband from his retreat, but she was stifled in the passage, and burnt to death, and her husband shared in her fate, leaving a helpless infant to the mercy of the murderers of its father and mother.—A hundred volumes like this could not contain the horrors that these revolutionary robbers committed in the name of liberty and equality.

Let this, ENGLISHMEN, be a lesson to you; throw from you the doctrine of EQUALITY, as you would the poisoned chalice. Wherever this detestable principle gains ground to any extent, ruin must inevitably ensue. Would you stifle the noble flame of emulation, and encourage ignorance and idleness? Would you inculcate defiance of the laws? Would you teach servants to be disobedient to their masters, and children to their parents? Would you sow the seeds of envy, hatred, robbery, and murder? Would you break all the bands of society asunder, and turn a civilized people into a horde of savages? This is all done by the comprehensive word EQUALITY.—But they tell us we are not to take it in the unqualified sense. In what sense are we to take it then? Either it means something more than liberty, or it means nothing at all. The misconstruction of the word *liberty* has done mischief enough in the world; to add to it a word of a still more dangerous extent, was to kindle

a flame that never can be extinguished but by the total debasement, if not destruction of the society, who are silly or wicked enough to adopt its use. We are told, that every government receives with its existence the latent disease that is one day to accomplish its death; but the government that is attacked with this political apoplexy is annihilated in the twinkling of an eye.

The civil disorganization of the state was but the forerunner of those curses which the Assembly had in store for their devoted country. They plainly perceived, that they never should be able to brutify the people to their wishes, without removing the formidable barriers of religion and morality. Their heads were turned, but it was necessary to corrupt their hearts.

Besides this, the leaders in the Assembly were professed modern philosophers; that is to say, atheists or deists. Camus and Condorcet openly taught atheism, and Ceruti said, with his last breath, "*the only regret I have in quitting the world, is, that I leave a religion on earth.*" These words, the blasphemy of an expiring demon, were applauded by the assembled legislators. It was not to be wondered at, that the vanity of such men should be flattered in the hope of changing a christian country into the most infidel upon the face of the earth; for, there is a sort of fanaticism in irreligion, that leads the profligate atheist to seek for proselytes with a zeal that would do honour to a good cause, but which, employed in a bad one, becomes the scourge of society.

The zeal of these philosophers for extirpating the truth was as great at least as that shown by the primitive christians for its propagation. But they proceeded in a very different manner. At first some circumspection was necessary. The more effectually to destroy the christian religion altogether, they began by sapping the foundation of the catholic faith, the only one that the people had been taught to revere. They formed a schism with the church of Rome, well knowing that the opinions of the vulgar, once set afloat, were as likely to fix on atheism as on any other system; and more so, as being less opposed

to their levelling principles than the rigid though simple morality of the gospel. A religion that teaches obedience to the higher powers, inculcates humility and peace, strictly forbids robbery and murder, and, in short, enjoins on men to do as they would be done unto, could by no means suit the armed ruffians, who were to accomplish the views of the French Assembly.

The press, which was made free for the worst of purposes, lent most powerful aid to these destructive reformers. While the catholic religion was ridiculed and abused, no other christian system was proposed in its stead; on the contrary, the profligate wretches who conducted the public prints, among whom were Mirabeau, Marat, Condorcet and Herbert, filled one half of their impious sheets with whatever could be thought of to degrade all religion in general. The ministers of divine worship, of every sect and denomination, were represented as cheats, and as the avowed enemies of the sublime and sentimental something, which the Assembly had in store for the regeneration of the world.

Most of my readers must have heard of the magnificent church at St. Genviève, at Paris. It was one of the most noble structures that the world had ever seen, and had besides the honour of being consecrated to the worship of Christ. This edifice the blasphemers seized on, as a receptacle for the remains of their "*great men*." From a christian church, they changed it into a pagan temple, and gave it the name of *Pantheon*. Condorcet, pre-eminent in infamy, proposed the decree, by which the name of God and that of St. Genviève were ordered to be effaced from the frontispiece.

To this *Pantheon* the ashes of Voltaire were first transported, and the Assembly spent no less than three days in determining whether those of *Rousseau* should not accompany them. This distinction, paid to two of the most celebrated deists of the age, was a full declaration of the principles, as well as the intention of the majority of the Assembly.

Having thus prepared the public mind, the Assembly made a bold attack on the church. They discovered, by the light of philosophy, that France contained too many churches, and, of course, too many pastors. Great part of them were therefore to be suppressed, and to make the innovation go down with the people, all tithes were to be abolished. The measure succeeded; but what did the people gain by the abolition of the tithes? not a farthing; for, a tax of twenty *per cent.* was immediately laid on the lands in consequence of it. The cheat was not perceived till it was too late.

But, the abolition of the tithes, the only motive of which was to debase the clergy in the opinions of the people, was but a trifle to what was to follow. The religious orders, that is to say, the communities of monks and nuns, possessed immense landed estates, and these the honest Assembly had marked for their own. As a pretext for the seizure they first decreed, that the wealth of the religious orders belonged to the nation, to that indefinite being, that exists every where and no where, and that has devoured all, without receiving any thing.

As this act of seizing the estates of the regular clergy was one of those that gave a decisive blow to property as well as religion in France, and one that has received the greatest applauses in this country, I shall enter a little at length into the flagrant injustice of it. Nor is the subject inapplicable to ourselves; for, though there are no religious orders in America, there are many people of property, and it is of a violation of property that I here charge the Assembly.

How the estates of the religious orders became the property of a certain somebody called the nation, in 1791, is to me wholly inconceivable; seeing that there never was a time, when they belonged to that society of men, now called the French. Great part of the monasteries had been founded five, six, seven hundred years, and some above a thousand years, before the most worthless of the French took it into their heads to be so many sovereigns. The founders were men of pious and austere lives, who,

wishing to retire from the world, obtained grants of uncultivated land, generally in some barren and solitary spot. There they formed little miserable settlements, which, by their frugality and labour, in time became rich meadows, farms and vineyards. A French historian, speaking of St. Etienne, says: "In 1058, he retired to Citeaux, then a vast forest, inhabited only by wild beasts. Here, with the help of his followers, he built a monastery of the wood of the forest; but, at first, it was no more than a group of shabby huts. Every thing bore the marks of extreme poverty: the crosses were of wood, the censers of copper, and the candlesticks of iron. All the ornaments were of coarse woollen or linen. Labour was the only means of subsistence with the monks of Citeaux. For many years bread was their only food, and they were often reduced to a scarcity of even that."

In time this forest became a cultivated and flourishing estate, and the successors of the first proprietors were not only at their ease, but even rich. The monastery, which was at first but a clump of ill-shaped huts, built with the limbs of trees, bark and turf, was become a magnificent pile. The church was beautiful beyond description. Instead of wood, and copper, and iron, the symbols of religion and the sacred vases were now of gold, silver and precious stones. This Abbey, at the time of the seizure by the Constituent Assembly, had an annual revenue of 120,000 French livres, or, about 6000 pounds sterling.

Now, I ask any honest man, was this the property of the French nation, or not? By what rule of right, by what principle of law or justice, could this estate belong to any other than the *lawful* successors of the first proprietors; that is to say, the possessors at the epoch of the seizure? No title ever framed by man could be so good as theirs. The community at Citeaux had never ceased to exist, nor for a single moment ceased to keep possession of their Abbey and its dependencies. They had first obtained a lawful grant of the land, had cleared, cultivated, and enriched it; and had enjoyed an uninterrupted posses-

sion during the space of seven hundred and thirty two years? but, at the end of the *enlightened* eighteenth century, the *Age of Reason*, up starts a horde of lazy worthless ruffians, calling themselves the nation, and lay claim to their estates!

Bulteau, in speaking of St. Benedict, says: "The
 "bodily labour ordered by this wise founder, was a
 "source of peace and tranquillity to the first monks, and
 "of opulence to their successors. The monasteries were
 "long an asylum to those christians, who fled from the
 "oppressions of the Goths and Vandals. The little
 "learning that remained in the barbarous and dark ages
 "was preserved in the cloisters. It is to them we owe
 "all the most precious remains of antiquity, as well as
 "many modern inventions."—Indeed, under the great
 disposer of all events, it is to them we owe that we are
 christians; that we possess the word of God, our guide
 to eternal life. They not only preserved this inestimable
 volume, but spread it in every country in the world.
 Without their agency, our ancestors might have continued
 pagans; nay, we ourselves, perhaps, might now have
 been sacrificing our children in the hollow of a Wicker-
 Idol.—Every man of any reading knows, that the monas-
 teries have continued to enrich the world with learned
 and useful productions. Some of the writings that do
 the greatest honour to the French nation, and to the
 human mind, have issued from the cloister. And yet, we
 have seen these men robbed of their estates, stripped of
 even their furniture and their vestments, driven from
 beneath their roofs, hunted like wild beasts, and, what
 I am ashamed to say, many of us have had the folly, or
 rather baseness, to applaud their unprincipled and blood-
 thirsty pursuers.

We are told that the monks were become too rich.
 Indeed this was their great offence in the eyes of an
 Assembly, whose motto was: "War to the rich, and
 "peace to the cottager" But we have seen that the founda-
 tion of these riches was laid by the labour of their
 predecessors, and we may observe that they were aug-

mented, not by oppression, as has been falsely asserted, but by a prudent management of their estates. Those communities that cultivated their own lands, were noted for the excellent manner of their cultivation, and for the superior quality of their produce; and those that rented out their farms let them at a low rate, so as to enable the farmer to enrich the land at the same time that he enriched himself. It was by such means that their estates became the most valuable in the country, a circumstance that poor shallow-headed Paine has brought against them as a heinous offence. They were gentle, humane masters and landlords: a man looked upon his fortune as made, when he became the tenant of a religious order.

And, how were these riches spent? Not in horses and coaches; people shut up in a cloister had no use for these. Not in balls and plays; for there they could never appear. Not in rich attire and costly repasts; for the greatest part of them were clothed worse than common beggars, and were forbidden the use of meat, and even of wine, the common drink of their country. Their riches did not go to aggrandize their families; because, as no individual could possess any thing, so he could bequeath or dispose of nothing. Who, then, profited from these riches?—Go ask the poor, who were happy in the neighbourhood of their convents. Go ask the aged, the infirm, the widow and the orphan. And ask them, too, what aid and consolation they have received from the thieving philosophers of the Revolution.

This charge of being *too rich*, is the most absurd as well as the most vile that could possibly be invented. Do we say to a man, who has acquired an immense fortune by the labour of his father, or by any other means; you are *too rich*, and therefore your property belongs to the nation?—There is a community at Bethlehem, very much resembling those we have here been speaking of. What should we think of a scoundrel legislator, who should propose to strip these people of their property, and turn them out to beg their bread, merely because the

value of their lands is increased? Such was he who first proposed the seizure of the church lands in France.

Some of the convents in France had been founded by lay persons, upon such and such conditions; and, in case of failure on the part of the community, the property was to revert to the heirs of the donor. Foundations of this kind were exactly resembling those we frequently see among us, of hospitals, seminaries, &c. and the deeds were still in existence at the time of the seizure; but an Assembly that paid no respect to a right of prescription, founded on a thousand years of uninterrupted possession, could not be expected to pay attention to the contents of a bit of old parchment.

We ought not to be astonished at hearing the author of *The Age of Reason* attempt to justify this act of impudent fraud; but let us see how his doctrine would suit, if applied to ourselves: for this is the only way to determine on its merits. Suppose (which God forbid!) the Principles of the French Revolution should be adopted by our Legislature, and they should declare all the meeting houses, seminaries, hospitals, &c. together with the estates which have been left for their support, *the property of the nation*, how should we receive this? Suppose an army of cut-throats should be sent to the Friends Meeting-house and thrust them out with the points of their bayonets; suppose another should go to the episcopal church, drive the congregation from the altar, strip the minister of his cassock, seize on the sacramental cup, and turn the church into a stable; I ask, how should we like this?—But, we are told, there is a vast difference; that the monks were superstitious drones, useless to society.—Ah! let us beware. Let us take care not to condemn, because we are protestants, a religion that differs from our own in form only; a religion that has yet more votaries than any other christian profession can boast of. And, as to the religious orders being useless to society, we have no proofs of this, but strong presumptive ones of the contrary; for, we know, that France was great and happy, that it had been increasing in extent, wealth,

and population, since the existence of those communities. However, I can by no means take upon me to prove the public utility of the monastic life; nor is it necessary; for, if no man is to possess property, unless he can prove his utility to society, I am afraid that few of us would be secure. How many hundreds of proprietors do we see, who are much *worse* than useless to society! Surely the public is as much benefited by a man who spends his life in a convent, as by one who spends it in a tavern, at a billiard table, or in a playhouse. Thousands and thousands there are who never worked a stroke, nor studied a single hour; vegetating mortals, who seem to live only to eat and drink, and be carried about. Yet we have never thought of seizing their estates. No; utility or inutility has nothing to do with the matter; the question before us is a simple question of right. Whether monks were necessary or useful in France, or not, we know there were such people, and that they possessed property legally acquired; and every honest man, capable of distinguishing between right and wrong, will hold in abhorrence the Assembly that dared to rob them of it.

When we hear of such crying acts of injustice as this, we are naturally led to enquire who were the first promoters of them. The reader will be astonished to hear, that the decree for this national robbery was first proposed by a bishop. Of a hundred and thirty-eight French Bishops, there were only four to be found, who would give their approbation to this deed, and one of these four was he who proposed the decree. The Abbé Barruel speaks of him in the following terms: "The assembly thought it high time to consummate their designs upon the church, by seizing what still remained of its possessions. This measure was so evidently contrary to every principle of justice and common honesty, that it was not easy to find a man so totally lost to every sentiment of humanity as to bring it forward. This second Judas was at last found in the college of the apostles. This was Taillerand Perigord, bishop of

"Autun.—This Perigord possessed all the baseness, all the vices of a Jew."—See Hist. of the French Clergy, page 15.

To obtain the sanction of the people to this act, they were told, that the wealth of the church would not only pay off the national debt, but render taxes in future unnecessary. No deception was ever so bare faced as this; but even this was not wanted; for the people themselves had already begun to taste the sweets of plunder. Avarice tempted the trading part of the nation to approve of the measure. At the time of passing the decree they were seen among the first to applaud it. They saw an easy means of obtaining those fine rich estates, the possession of which they had, perhaps, long coveted. In vain they were told, that the purchaser would partake in the infamy of the robbery; that, if the title of the communities could not render property secure, that same property could never be secure under any title the plunderers could give. In vain were they told, that in sanctioning the seizure of the wealth of others, they were sanctioning the seizure of their own, whenever that all devouring monster, the sovereign people, should call on them for it. In vain were they told all this: they purchased: they saw with pleasure the plundered clergy driven from their dwellings; but scarcely had they taken possession of their ill-gotten wealth, when not only that, but the remains of their other property were wrenched from them. Since that we have seen decree upon decree launched forth against the rich: their account books have been submitted to public examination: they have been obliged to give drafts for the funds they possessed even in foreign countries; all their letters have been intercepted and read. How many hundreds of them have we seen led to the scaffold, merely because they were proprietors of what their sovereign stood in need of! These were acts of unexampled tyranny; but, as they respected the persons who applauded the seizure of the estates of the church, they were *perfectly just*. Several of these avaricious purchasers have been murdered within the walls of those buildings, whence they had assisted to drive the lawful proprietors: this was

just : it was the measure they had meted to others. They shared the fate of the injured clergy, without sharing the pity which that fate excited. When dragged forth to slaughter in their turn, they were left without even the right of complaining : the last stab of the assassin was accompanied with the cutting reflection, that it was *just*.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, as it is, perhaps, the most striking and most awful example of the consequences of a violation of property, that the world ever saw. Let it serve to warn all those who wish to raise their fortunes on the ruin of others, that, sooner or later, their own turn must come. From this act of the Constituent Assembly we may date the violation, in France, of every right that men ought to hold dear. Hence the seizure of all gold and silver as the property of the nation : hence the law preventing the son to claim the wealth of his father : hence the abominable tyranny of requisitions ; and hence thousands and thousands of the murders, that have disgraced unhappy France.

Since the seizure of the church estates, there has not, in fact, been any such thing as private property in France ; for, though the Constituent Assembly did not pass a decree of this import, they knew perfectly well how to pass decrees and establish regulations amounting to the same thing. Some of their enormous contributions on the rich, were called *patriotic gifts* ; but he who refused to pay the *gift* inserted in the list, knew he had but a few hours to live. The money and jewels deposited at the bar of the Assembly, and on the altar of the country, amounted to immense sums. These were held out as a proof of general approbation of their measures ; but had the Assembly been candid, they would have confessed, that these offerings were the pure effect of fear, of a panic that had seized all the proprietors in the nation, and that each giver's hatred to their cause might be measured by the sum he deposited. It was not a grateful, free-will offering, but a sacrifice, that the trembling wretch came to offer at the shrine of tyranny, in order to save his house from the flames, or his own head, or that of some

dear relation or parent from the scaffold. Could a man, reduced to acts like this, be said to possess any thing?

The successor of the Constituent Assembly laid aside the mask, as no longer necessary. On the 13th of March, 1794, all the merchants of Bourdeaux (known for one of the most infamously patriotic towns in the kingdom) were arrested in one day, and condemned, in presence of the guillotine, to a fine of *one hundred millions* of French livres, upwards of *four millions* sterling. On the 18th of April, the rich banker, La Borde, after having *purchased his life eight times*, was guillotined, and the remainder of his riches confiscated. On the 10th of May, twenty-seven rich Farmers-General were executed, because they had amassed riches under the monarchy. Finally, on the 27th of June, all property, of whatever description, was decreed *to belong to the nation*, and was put in a state of requisition accordingly, as the *persons* of the whole of the inhabitants had been before.

The milk-and-water admirers of the Constituent Assembly pretend to be shocked at these measures; but what are these measures more than an improvement on those of that Assembly? The progress was not only natural, but even necessary to the support of the revolution. Had there been still church-estates to seize, and monks to murder, it is probable that the tyrants who have succeeded the Constituent Assembly, would not have surpassed their predecessors; but, that source being exhausted, they were obliged to find out others, or return to order and obedience. And I should be glad to know, if the property of one individual, or one society, was become the property of the sovereign people by virtue of a decree of one Assembly, why the same claim should not be made to the property of other individuals, or other societies. Nor can I believe, whatever Atheists and Deists may say to the contrary, that it was any more unjust to guillotine Bankers and Merchants, or even members of the Constituent Assembly, than to guillotine or massacre poor, defenseless, friendless Priests.—There is such an intimate connection between the security of

property, and that of the person to whom that property belongs, that one can never be said to be safe, while the other is in danger. Tyrant princes, tyrant assemblies, or tyrant mobs, when once they are suffered to take away with impunity the property of the innocent man, will feel little scruple at taking away his life also.— Robbery and murder are the natural auxiliaries of each other, and, with a people rendered ferocious and hardened by an infidel system that removes all fear of an hereafter, they must for ever be inseparable.

Before the decree was passed for the assumption of the estates of the regular clergy, every calumny that falsehood could invent, and every vexation that tyranny could enforce, were employed to debase the whole body of the clergy and the religion they taught. Songs and caricatures were sung, or hawked about, by shameless strumpets in the pay of the Assembly. In these not only the clerical functions and the lives of the clergy were ridiculed, but even the life of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary. The Incarnation of our Saviour became the subject of a *farce*, in the smutty language of Parisian fish-women. Who were the characters in this farce, I leave the shuddering reader to conceive.

A decree, in form of an *invitation**, was issued, for bringing the gold and silver from the churches to the mint. It was well known, that there were none of these metals in the churches, except the vases, the crucifixes, and other symbols, hitherto held sacred. What an effect the coining up of these must have on the minds of the giddy multitude, is not difficult to imagine. Many, however, even of the most depraved, felt a momentary horror; but this horror the Assembly knew how to do away. Hundreds, I might say thousands, of abandoned

* "Invitations from superiors," says some one, "favour strongly of commands." This was so much the case in the present instance, that the priest who dared to disobey, was sure to expiate his disobedience with his life. The magistrates often entered the church, and seized the chalices on the altar, during the celebration of the mass. Such are revolutionary invitations.

scribblers were employed to propagate the new principles. Their little filthy ditties were spread through all the departments, at the expence of the nation. Some of these were catechisms in rhyme, in which the constitution was substituted for God, the assembly for the saints, and both recommended to the adoration of the French patriots. The journal or letter, as it was called, of *Pere du Chêne*, written by one Hebert, and of which it is said fifty thousand copies were struck off daily, was sent into the towns and villages by the carriers of the decrees of the assembly. This Hebert, whose strumpet has since been adored at Paris, as the Goddess of reason, was a professed atheist. His journal contained the most outrageous abuse of all that was respectable and sacred, interlarded with oaths and execrations without number. I have one now before me, which has for title: "*Lettre du veritable Pere du Chêne, bougrement patriotique*," in English: "Letter of the true Father du Chêne b—gerly patriotic;" I would here insert an extract from this letter; but, I trust, I shall be believed, when I say, the contents are fully answerable to the title. Such were the agents of Condorcet and his colleagues: thus did they corrupt the morals of the people; thus did they lead them from one degree of vice to another; thus were they hardened up to rob and to murder; and thus did the boasted constituent assembly lay the foundation of all those horrors we have since heard of.

The magistrates in the different municipalities, chosen from the scum of the nation, distributed these infernal writings among the people in their precincts, and particularly among the young people. If by chance, some magistrate was found too scrupulous to execute their will, means were soon invented to get rid of him. Some pretext or other was never wanting to excite the mob to put an end to him and his resistance. Chatel, Mayor of St. Denys, was one of this description. The mob were told that this man was the cause of the dearness of bread. They flew to his house, and obliged him to reduce the price according to their will, though it was well known,

that he had not the power to reduce it at all, unless at his own expence. The rabble were dispersing; but they had not fulfilled the bloody wishes of the revolutionary agents, who had nothing less in view than the lowering of the price of bread. They were instigated to return to the unfortunate magistrate. First, they attempted to hang him; but, wearied with his resistance, one of them took out his knife, and cut his head partly off, while several others pricked him with their bayonets. The unhappy victim was still alive after the back of his neck was cut asunder, and was heard to groan out: "*for heaven's sake kill me! kill me! you make me suffer too long!*"—The sanguinary villain, who had begun to cut his head off, now threw away his knife, and borrowed that of his comrade, with which he finished the work. When he found that his own knife was not sufficient, he said, with a cool indifference, "*lend me your knife, for mine is not worth a curse.*" That which was lent him was a little two-penny knife with a wooden handle.—During this time other assassins gave him several stabs, with their knives, in the belly and stomach; one of them turned his knife slowly in the flank of the dying man, and said to him, laughing: "*Does that enter well! Don't you find the day-light peep into you?*"—He at last expired, after the most inconceivable torments. His body was dragged along the streets of St. Denys, with his head tied to his feet.—A resolution of the town has since declared him *innocent of any offence whatever*: he had given abundant assistance to the poor the winter before: the diminution he had just made in the price of bread was at his own expence; and this barbarous punishment was his recompence. His wife went distracted, and has ever since been in a mad-house. His assassins obtained pardon from the assembly; a circumstance much less surprising, than that they should think it necessary to ask it. See du Cour's Memoire, page 57.

Examples of this kind, and such were wanting in very few parts of the country, could not fail to ensure an implicit obedience on the part of the magistrates.

The debasement of religion was nearly completed by the public sale of the suppressed churches and monasteries. The grossest indecency presided at all these demoniac scenes. When the vile agent of the Assembly, hammer in hand, had exhausted his auctioneer rhetoric, in recommending a church as an excellent barn, stable, or play-house, it was knocked down to the base and avaricious speculator, while the hireling mob shouted applause. The church of St. Aldegone at St. Omer's, (I love to cite instances,) the highest in that ancient town, and for hundreds of years the pride of its inhabitants, was sold to a Jew of Dunkirk, for the pitiful sum of 20,000 French livres in assignats, not more than 200 pounds sterling, nor half the cost of one of the pillars. This beautiful edifice, by the spire of which the town was known at a great distance, had been chosen for destruction, that the humiliation of religion might be the more striking. It met with such treatment as might be expected from the hands of an infidel. Its lofty spire was tumbled to the earth in less than a month: the body of the church was turned into a rope-walk, and the Jew proprietor, to complete the degradation of Christianity, left a representation of the Lord's Supper uneffaced in the chancel. What must be the grief, what the indignation of the thinking and pious part of the inhabitants of St. Omer's, thus to see their favourite church, the sanctuary of their God, and the God of their fathers, delivered, for a bundle of depreciated paper-money, into the hands of a descendant of the murderers of him, to whose worship it was consecrated!

To give the reader a just idea of the ribaldry of the scenes of brutal impiety, exhibited at the pillage of the convents, is totally impossible. A dozen or two of carts rattling along with a commissary at their head, followed by an escort of ragamuffins, decorated with a bit of three coloured ribbon, and armed with hammers, axes, crow-bars and spades, generally formed the corps for such an expedition. Hardly were the doors opened, when the vaults rang with their hammering and their oaths. In a few hours the whole was gutted. The decorations of

the altar, the priest's vestments, statues, pictures, books, manuscripts, the most precious pieces of antiquity, the productions of long and laborious lives of study, were hauled away as so much rubbish. The paintings on the doors, walls, cielings, and other fixtures, were effaced or disfigured; the fury of the enlightened ruffians descended even to the graves of the deceased fathers.

At the expulsion of the nuns, the conduct of the revolutionists, was, if possible, still more swinish and cruel. While the gibing commissiary pulled aside their veils to examine their faces, his blackguard attendants congratulated them on the *pleasures* they were going to enjoy in the world, and this in a language calculated to raise a blush on the cheek of a common street-walker. They seemed to enjoy their tears, and even to make some sacrifices to augment them. Had any one a piece of needle-work which she wished to preserve, it was rent to pieces before her face. A singing bird that had the misfortune to have been the companion of the solitary hours of its mistress, was sure to be taken from her and killed. To these dejected and defenceless females every insult and indignity was offered, not forgetting the last of which beastly liberties can be guilty.

In a country where the crucifix was sent to the mint, where churches were put up at auction, where the half-worn cassock, the surplice, and the veil, made part of the assortment of a dealer in old cloaths, and were exposed to public sale in the market-place; where the ministers of the gospel were scoffed at, reviled, and frequently murdered with as little ceremony as one would kill a dog; where the most daring blasphemies were uttered and published and spread through the country, not only with the permission of its governors, but by their direction; in a country where all this was practised, religion could not be of long duration. Religion, and even the Catholic religion, did, however, still subsist in France, at least in *form*. The Assembly had as yet passed no positive decree for its abolition. They had robbed the church, had stripped its altars, and degra-

ded its ministers ; but still the most pious and active of those ministers were left in the exercise of their functions. The parochial clergy, though deprived of the tithes, had a stipend allowed them. They yet remained with their parishioners, many of whom, indeed nearly all the elderly and sober part of them, continued as firmly attached to their pastors as at any former period.

Things were not suffered to remain long in this state. The Constituent Assembly well knew, that they and religion could never exist for any length of time in the same country. The parochial clergy were men of talents and industry. They generally decided all the little disputes between their parishioners ; to which amiable capacity, they often joined that of physician or surgeon ; and these their beneficent services were always rendered without fee or reward. Even the atheists and deists themselves had repeatedly acknowledged their virtuous modesty, and the great utility they were of to the community at large. Such a body of men, immoveably attached to the religion they taught, was truly formidable to the new tyrants. Religion had received a severe blow ; but if these men retained their cures, it might recover. Nay, what was still more dreadful, the monarchy itself might recover along with it ; and it is not difficult to conceive, how an idea like this must haunt the minds of the pupils of the savage and impious Diderot, who hoped to see " the last " of kings strangled with the guts of the last of priests." In short, the parochial clergy, were the only men on earth they had now to fear, and these they got rid of by a stratagem worthy of an Assembly, the leaders of which joined to the most hardened wickedness the profoundest dissimulation.

They laid aside the *Rights of Man*, together with the famous constitution from which they took the adjunct to their name, and which we have since seen burnt by the hands of the common hangman (or rather common guillotiner) in that very city of Paris, where it had been issued amidst the applauses and even adorations of the populace. They laid aside the discussion of this instrument of short-

lived and ridiculous memory, to draw up another, which they were pleased to call, "the Civic Constitution of the Clergy." They were constitution mad, absolutely frantic.

It might be sufficient to say of this latter constitution, that it was just as subversive of religion as their other constitution was of every principle of government and sound policy. They knew it to be in direct opposition to the very nature of the catholic religion: yet they had the assurance to tell the people, that it was not; they even went so far as to protest, that they would live and die in the religion of their forefathers, at the very moment when they were taking the surest measure in the world for destroying it. They were led to this hypocritical declaration from a fear that the body of the people were not yet ripe for a total abolition of religion, and, as we shall see in the sequel this fear, was not entirely unfounded. By persuading the people, that nothing was intended against their faith, they had an additional handle against the clergy, by representing them as unfriendly to their "Civil Constitution," merely because it was necessary to the support of the *Rights of Man*.

This instrument did not, however, pass into a law without considerable resistance. There were yet some honest and virtuous men even among the members of the Constituent Assembly. These had remained with them, not to aid in overturning the government, and effecting the dreadful revolution that has since rendered the country a slaughter-house, but to oppose the destructive measures of the philosophers, and, if possible, save the sinking state. At the head of these was the learned and eloquent Abbé Maury. He opposed this "Civil Constitution," with all the powers of reasoning, and all the charms of eloquence: but it was casting pearls before swine. When was an atheist open to conviction? The decree passed, and was soon after followed by another, obliging the clergy to swear to observe and maintain the "Civil Constitution." This oath they could not take without breaking that which they had taken at entering.

into the priesthood; and that the Assembly had every reason to suppose they would not do. Whether they did or not, however, the end of their tyrants was answered: if they refused, they were to be driven from their livings; if they complied, they must be looked upon as apostates, and be deserted by all those who were still attached to them. In either case the tottering remains of religion must come to the ground. The clergy, and indeed the whole nation, and all Europe, saw the real object of this inhuman and impious decree; but the Assembly, surrounded with their *enlightened* myrmidons, the Parisian mob, bid defiance to earth and heaven.

Generally speaking, the clergy were resolved not to take the oath. "Lose no time," said the Abbé Maury, "in the delivery of your challenge. By shedding our blood you may ingratiate yourselves with your constituents. Lose, then, not a single moment. Your victims are here; they are ready. To their torments add not that of suspense. Why not vote at once for our execution, glut your hatred, and quench for a little your thirst for blood? Hasten, I say, while the power is in your hands; for remember, I now foretel, *your reign will be of short duration.*"

This prophetic address, which we have seen so fully verified, served only to inflame. Eight days only were given the clergy to determine on compliance or refusal, during which no stratagem that base and degenerate tyranny could devise, was left untried to intimidate them. This was ever their practice, when they had an important blow to strike. Rochefoucauld, formerly a duke, declared, at the time the decree for the seizure of the monasteries was under deliberation, that "*the lives of the bishops and priests in the Assembly depended upon the passing of it;*" and, in order to silence all those who opposed it, a list of their names was stuck up on the walls, with a promise of a reward of "twelve hundred livres *to any patriot who would assassinate them.*" According to this laudable custom, this instance of French liberty, when the day for taking the oath, or, as it was well-

termed, "the forswearing day," arrived, the Assembly took care to call in the aid of the fish-women and mob. "*To the lamp-post with the non-juring bishops and priests!*" was echoed from the streets and the galleries. The ruffians were prepared for murder, and were howling for their prey, like so many wolves round a sheep-fold.

Let the reader imagine himself in the situation of one of these unfortunate clergymen; an oath of apostacy before him, and a halter behind his back, and then let him give me his opinion of the *Rights of Man*.

This did not intimidate the clergy; only thirty of whom could be prevailed on to submit, and these were already known to have abandoned their religion. When the oath was tendered to the bishop of Agen, "Gentlemen," said he, "I lament not the loss of my fortune; but there is another loss which I should ever lament, the loss of your esteem and my faith. I could not fail to lose both, if I took the oath now proposed to me." The old bishop of Poitiers, fearing he might lose so fair an opportunity of bearing testimony of his sincerity, advanced to the tribune, and calling on the president to command silence; "Gentlemen," said he, "I am seventy years old; I have been thirty years a bishop: I will never disgrace my grey hairs by an oath of apostacy." Upon this manly declaration of the reverend old prelate, the clergy rose from their seats, thanked him for his example, and told the Assembly he had expressed their unanimous sentiments.

Not being a Roman Catholic, I hope I shall be excused, when I freely declare, that I much question, whether the ministers of any Protestant communion, in a moment so terrible, surrounded with assassins, and without a single friend, would have shown *such* a noble intrepidity. "They have lost their money," said the profligate Mirabeau, on this occasion, "*but they have saved their honour.*" And, if this was the case, what had the Assembly done? If, to preserve honour, it was necessary to refuse an obedience to their decrees, what sort of decrees must those be?

The Assembly were disconcerted by this firm resistance on the part of the clergy; they knew the clergy in general would never take the oath, but they did not imagine that those amongst themselves would, amidst the vociferations of their cannibals, have the courage to give such a positive denial. For a moment they felt abashed; but they were gone too far to think of retreating. The apostate Abbé Gregoire, whom we have since seen amongst the organizers of a pagan festival, was, on this occasion, chosen to convince the clergy, that the oath might be taken without any violation of their faith. After this, in order to deprive the clergy of an opportunity of defending their opinions in opposition to the oath, they were ordered to advance, and take it at once. This decree had no effect:—not a man advanced. Now the matter was brought to a point: the decree for enforcing the oath must be repealed, or the clergy must be driven from their livings, and those in the Assembly from their seats. It is hardly necessary to say that the latter was adopted; one tyrannical measure is the natural and inevitable consequence of another.

A decree was now passed for the expulsion of all the non-juring bishops and priests, and for the choosing of others in their stead. From this day, it may be said, there was no such thing as an established religion in France. The axe had long been laid to the root of the tree; it was ready to fall, and this stroke levelled it with the earth.

Had the dispute been about this or that tenet; had the oath been imposed with the intention of exchanging one religion for another, the case would have been different; the expulsion might have taken place without any considerable injury to the morals of the people. But, the struggle was that of Religion against Irreligion, that of Christianity against Atheism.

It was (I hope it is so no longer) the opinion of Dr. Priestley, and many other *philosophical divines*, that any *change whatever* was preferable to the continuation of the catholic religion in France. There is a passage in Moore's Journal, which contains so compleat an answer

to every thing these gentlemen have advanced on this subject, that I am surprized, considering the principles of the journalist and his companion Lauderdale, that it ever found a place in that volume.

The Doctor, being in Abbeville, met with a protestant clergyman, whom he congratulated on the deliverance of himself and his brethren from the vexation of Romish persecution. The clergyman seemed to lament, that along with the spirit of persecution, that of religion daily diminished. "Upon which," says the Doctor, "I observed, that, as nothing could be more opposite to true religion than a spirit of persecution, the former, it was to be hoped, would return without the latter; but, in the mean time, the protestants were happy in not only being tolerated in the exercise of their religion, but also on being rendered capable of enjoying every privilege and advantage which the catholics themselves enjoy."

"We are not allowed those advantages," resumed the clergyman, "from any regard they bear to our religion, but from a total indifference of their own."

"Whatever may be the cause," replied I, "the effect is the same with regard to you."

"No," said he, "the effect might be better, not only with respect to us, but to all France: for the spirit of persecution might have disappeared, without an indifference for all religion coming in its place: and in that case there would have been more probability of the true religion gaining ground; for it is easier to draw men from an erroneous doctrine to a true one, than to impress the truths of religion on minds which despise all religion whatever."

"But although you may not be able to make converts of them," I replied, "still you may live happy among them, in the quiet possession of your own religion, and all your other advantages."

"I doubt it much," resumed he; "being persuaded that, in a country where religious sentiments are effaced from the minds of the bulk of the people, crimes of the

"deepest guilt will prevail in spite of all the restraints of law."

How fully, alas! has the opinion of this good clergyman been confirmed! Here we see a man living upon the spot, a Frenchman and a protestant, lamenting the decay of the catholic religion, and trembling for the consequences. This man plainly perceived the drift of the philosophical legislators: he saw that the destruction of all religion was their object, while they pretended to be correcting its abuses.—Very far was he from saying, with our zealous reformers, "that any change was preferable to the continuation of popery," and yet, I think we ought to allow him to be as much interested in a change, and as good a judge of its conveniences and inconveniences, as persons on this side the sea; except, indeed, that he might not be *enlightened* by the rays of modern philosophy.

From this digression we must return to the expelled clergy. The parish priests generally followed the example of their bishops in refusing to take the oath. Others were, of course, appointed to replace them. *Tailier and Perigord*, whom we have seen proposing the assumption of the church estates, was now become a sort of Pope to the modern church, and was busily employed laying *unholy hands* on the heads of the new bishops. *Gobet*, one of the four bishops who had forsworn themselves, was rewarded for his apostacy by the bishoprick of Paris. Vagabond philosophical abbés, who had never been able to obtain admittance into the priesthood under the old government, were now not only accepted, but sought after. To these were added the secular priests and monks who had apostatized. Even the wretches who had been expelled from their cures, or orders, for irregular or criminal conduct, were now called in from Germany and the Low Countries. What a sight must it be to those who yet preserved some respect for their religion and their country, to see these strollers, with their frumpets at their heels, returning to take on them the care of the morals and souls of a numerous people! after all, the

number of apostates was insufficient : a great many parishes remained without any priests at all.

The instalment of the new priests was commonly, not to say always, attended with tumult and violence. Many of their predecessors were knocked down, stabbed, or shot, at their church doors, the day, or the day after, they had refused to conform. The priest of the village of Spet-Saux, while he was explaining to his parishioners his reasons for refusing to take the oath, received a musket ball in his breast, and tumbled dead from the pulpit into the aisle.

Where there was no resistance but on the part of the priest, an assassination put an end to the struggle ; but, in some places, the resistance was more general. The parishioners were divided ; one part the champions of the apostate, and the other those of the old priest. Church-time was the moment for deciding these disputes, and the church-yard the field of action. These affrays were often bloody ; victory sometimes leaned to the side of justice ; but, as the apostate appeared in person at the head of his troops, as he had the young people generally on his side, and always the mob and municipal officers, with their national guards, he seldom failed to keep the field. Some of these wretches have been seen conducted to the altar to the sound of drums and trumpets, at the very moment when their partizans were murdering on the outside of the church.

The expelling of the parochial clergy tried the real sentiments of the body of the French people more than any one act of their tyrants ever did, before or since. Generally speaking, the trial was honourable to them ; for, if we except Paris, and some other places immediately under the influence of the revolutionary clubs, they wished to retain their ancient pastors, and did not scruple to declare that wish, notwithstanding the vociferations of hundreds of mob in the pay of the Assembly ; notwithstanding all these petty assemblies of subaltern tyrants, called municipal officers, who came to order them to receive an apostate, *in the name of the law* ; notwithstand-

ing thousands of spies and assassins, ever ready to betray and murder them; in spite of all these, whole parishes flocked round their priests, pressed them to continue, followed them to the fields, and left the apostates to say mass to the bare walls. Many of the latter, though they continued to receive the revolutionary salary for upwards of two years, never could boast of above three or four voluntary hearers.

Wherever this obstinate attachment to religion appeared, the Assembly knew how to make the refractory feel their authority. True tyrants, they suffered no one to thwart their will with impunity. Property, honour, conscience, all must yield to their sultanic decrees!

Condorcet, the atheist Condorcet, proposed flagellation; and this was commonly inflicted on the women and children who assisted at the masses of the non-juring clergy. The Abbé Barruel (page 79 of the French edition) tells us, that three sisters of one of the charity-houses at Paris, expired under the rods of the assassins. Ungrateful monsters! the lives of these women had been totally devoted to the service of the sick, the lame and the blind. By their vow they were excluded from the pleasures of the world, without being excluded from its pains. They had made a voluntary surrender of all they possessed, had assumed the garb, and submitted to the austerities of the monastic life, in order to devote themselves to the mournful occupation of attending on the poor who laboured under infirmities. It was said, they did this to secure themselves a place in heaven; and most certainly they took the surest way. I feel a reluctance to call such people superstitious; for, if they were so, their superstition was of a most amiable kind; and surely nothing short of the principles of this hellish revolution could have hardened the hearts of men to scourge them to death, and that merely because they would not disgrace themselves by receiving the sacrament from the contaminated hands of an apostate.

It were endless to enumerate all the different sorts of persecution exercised against those who remained attached to their religion. Little children were beaten half to

death; the hair and ears of women were cut off; they were mounted on asses, and led about in the most unseemly and shocking guise. The instance of John Cantabel deserves particular notice. Cantabel was an honest peasant, sincerely attached to the religion of his fathers. He happened to have a little catechism which had been published by the non-juring clergy; it was found in his house; and this was a sufficient crime. A committee of municipal officers ordered the catechism to be burnt; a great fire was made; Cantabel was brought forth, and commanded to throw the book into it. "No," says the heroic peasant, "it contains the principles of my religion; it has been my guide and my comfort, and it now gives me the courage to tell you, that I will never commit it to the flames." Upon this he was threatened, but still he remained resolute. One of the ruffians seized a flaming torch, and held it under his hand. "Burn on," said he, "you may burn not only my hand, but my whole body, before I will do any thing to dishonour my religion." He was afterwards mounted on a horse, his back to the head, and the tail in his hand, and was thus conducted about amidst the shouts of the rabble. The vile wretches, when tired of their sport, suffered him to creep home, more dead than alive.—This is the *liberty of conscience* in the "*Age of Reason*!" This is the *toleration* we might expect from atheists, from these infidel philosophers, who are continually exclaiming against the prejudices of their forefathers, and against the sad effects of bigotry and religious zeal. In the cant of these *enlightened* reformers, this peasant was a *fanatic*, an *aristocrat*, a *rebel to the law*, and, as such, they will tell you that he was worthy of death.

Notwithstanding the partial opposition the apostates met with, and the horror their conduct as well as their ministry excited in all good minds, they, at last, found themselves in the possession of the churches, to the exclusion of the ancient priests. Such of these latter as had escaped death, were now bereft of all means of subsistence; they were therefore obliged to become a charge to

their faithful parishioners. Had there been any such things as toleration and liberty under the Constituent Assembly, these unfortunate men might still have found a retreat among their wealthy neighbours, that would have left them no reason to regret the loss of their salaries. But the greatest part of their wealthy neighbours were already reduced to their own situation, and those who were not, knew that the reception of a non-juring priest would amount to a proof of *aristocracy*, sufficient to lead them to the guillotine. The expelled priests were, then, obliged to take shelter in some obscure and miserable cabin, and often was the terror so great, that, like persons infected with the plague, no one would admit them beneath his roof.

From such a state of misery and humiliation some fled in disguise to the countries surrounding France; some to recesses in the forest, whither the peasants of the neighbourhood brought them the means of existence. Numbers, however, still remained in their towns and villages. Seeing the whole country swarming with assassins, they thought, perhaps, they might as well wait the stab in their own parishes as to seek it at a distance. Many, too, from age and infirmity, were absolutely incapable of travelling; and, besides, the small remainder of a life so full of bitterness, could not, with such men, be an object of sufficient importance to induce them to abandon those of their parishioners, who still sought their advice and consolation. Some were retained by their affection to their relations, or their parents; it is so hard to break the bands of nature, to tear oneself from all one holds dear, that the risk of death in competition with such a separation loses half its terrors.

The ancient priests who remained in their parishes, or near them, though often obliged to secrete themselves, and though, to appearance, generally shunned, were resorted to by great numbers, particularly of the elderly people. I have already observed, that, among the youth, there was a pretty general bias toward the apostates. Hence ensued such scenes of division and persecution as no coun-

try on earth, except France, ever witnessed. Friends were divided against friends; one branch of a family against another. It often happened that the parents treated their children as apostates, and the children their parents as aristocrats; quarrels and bloodshed were as often the consequences. We have seen a son cut off the heads of his father and mother, because they refused to attend at the mass of an apostate, carry the heads to his club, and receive applauses for the deed. Acts like this were not frequent; but others very near approaching it, were not only frequent, but general. Sons, and even daughters, have been known to beat and lacerate their parents in the most cruel manner. Hundreds of both sexes have been led to prison, and publicly accused by their children. A man at Faulconberg, in Artois, blew his wife's brains out with his musket, and left her wallowing in her blood on the hearth with seven small children crying round her!

Can any man, with the common feelings of humanity about his heart, contemplate such scenes of horror, without execrating the revolution that gave rise to them?

The apostate priests failed not to fan the flames of discord and division. To ingratiate themselves with the young and ignorant, they mixed in all their amusements and debauches, treated them at their own houses, and instituted civic festivals for the mob, with whom they were continually surrounded. Their masses were sung amidst the shouts of robbers and murderers, and often interrupted by the arrival of some innocent conscientious person, dragged in to assist at what he looked upon as a profanation.—Their churches resembled guard-houses, rather than places of divine worship. In proportion as they perceived themselves neglected and despised, their wrath against their unshaken predecessors increased. Vexed and humiliated to find that all the respectable part of their parishioners took as much pains to avoid them, as to seek a communication with their old pastors, the whole weight of their vengeance fell on these latter. In their existence itself they saw a memento of their own infamy.

There is not a species of cruelty that the most obdurate can devise which they left unessayed. They hunted them from their retreats, from the houses of their friends and relations, from the woods and caverns even, to expose them to insult and murder. The infirmities of age, the tears of parents, nothing could soften the hearts of these apostate wretches. We have seen enough of the sufferings of the old clergy in the first chapter of this work ; but there is yet one instance which I must quote. " I was
 " at Trois Rivières (says le Voyageur de la Revolution)
 " a little village in Picardy. I saw several women running
 " by the inn where I had put up ; they all seemed much
 " alarmed. I asked the landlord what was the matter :
 " he told me that the revolutionary priest, provoked to
 " find that none of the village attended to his mass, had
 " been that morning to Ville D'Eu for a party of national
 " guards, to aid him in driving the former priest from a
 " little cottage, where he and his mother had taken
 " shelter. The man gave a most affecting account of
 " this good priest, who was upwards of fourscore years
 " of age, and who had been the rector of that place for
 " more than fifty years. On the day he was to deliver
 " his cure into the hands of the apostate, he summoned his
 " little flock to meet him in the church for the last time.
 " Not a soul was absent, old or young. The women
 " carried their infants in their arms ; and two old people,
 " not able to walk, were carried on couches. *My chil-*
 " *dren, says the old man, I have pressed your tender hands*
 " *on the baptismal font : I have sung the requiem for the*
 " *souls of your fathers : I must now bid you an eternal*
 " *farewell, deprived of the consolation of leaving my ashes*
 " *amongst you.*"—Here he ceased ; tears stifled his voice ;
 " the sobs and cries of his audience rendered the scene
 " too much for him. While the landlord was speaking,
 " we heard a discharge of muskets, and a loud shriek of
 " women. We ran to the spot. The peasants of the
 " village, about forty in number, had assembled round
 " the cottage with clubs to defend their pastor ; but, the
 " enemy having fire-arms, they had been obliged to give

“ way, leaving two of their companions dead, and several
 “ wounded. I now beheld a sight sufficient to melt the
 “ heart of a tyger. Two ruffians of the national guard
 “ were dragging out this venerable old man by the hair of
 “ his head, by those locks as white as snow. He had
 “ received a wound in his cheek, from which the blood
 “ ran down on his garments.—In this situation was he
 “ led off, bare-headed and bare-footed, towards *Ville*
 “ *D’Eu*, while his poor old parent, who had been many
 “ years blind and dumb, remained on her bed, happily
 “ insensible of the sorrows of her son. As the villains
 “ pulled him along, all the words he was heard to utter,
 “ were, My Mother! Oh! my Mother!—the women and
 “ children of the village followed the escort with cries
 “ and lamentations, till the savages drove them back with
 “ the points of their bayonets.”

Nor were those of the laity spared who resorted to the
 old clergy for the exercise of the rites which they looked
 upon as essential. A new married couple having refused to
 have the ceremony performed by one of the apostates, a
 party of his myrmidions broke in among them the wed-
 ding night. The husband made his escape: the wife,
 in a swoon, became the prey of the party. They grati-
 fied their brutal passion, without gratifying their ferocity.
 They tore off her breasts, as a tiger might have done
 with his claws, and threw them on the floor. They then
 left her to wait till death relieved her from her horrible
 situation.

I should have scrupled inserting a fact like this, though
 taken from so respectable a work, if the former part of
 this work did not contain others, if possible, surpassing
 it. I say, if possible; for I declare I know not which
 is most shocking, the tearing off a woman's breasts, or
 the ripping a child from her womb, and sticking it on
 the point of a bayonet. Indeed, the greatest part of the
 facts related here, are so much more shocking and ter-
 rific than any thing we have ever before had an idea of,
 that common murders appear as trifling.

By means like these, the old clergy and their adherents were extirpated, and religion along with them. The business of the new clergy (if the riches deserve the name) was not to establish one church on the ruins of another: it would be as preposterous as to suppose that an assembly of Atheists and Deists had any such intention, as to suppose that a horde of apostates were calculated for the work. These latter were, in fact, so many missionaries of blasphemy and murder, sent into the provinces purposely to destroy the ancient priesthood. The Assembly foresaw, that when that was done, their new priests would at any time become the apostles of infidelity.

It must be considered that these legislators did not want for cunning: an elegant writer has lately called them "architects of ruin;" and, indeed, they possessed the art of destroying in its utmost perfection. Their calculations with respect to their new priests were extremely just: they came out to an unit. When they had annihilated their predecessors, they were not only ready to second the decrees for the abolition of christianity altogether; they were not only instrumental therein, but they had led the way. Several began to teach the religion of *Reason* in the Jacobin clubs, of which they were all members, and even in the pulpit. The garb of a priest itself became a burthen to them, and they humbly asked leave to quit it for the more honourable one of the national guard. The apostate bishop of Moulin, who had been consecrated by the unhallowed hands of *Taillerand*, wrote to the Convention that he officiated with a pike and liberty cap, instead of the crozier and the mitre. It was this vile wretch who first caused to be written on the burying ground "this is the place of everlasting sleep —"

Three weeks after this communication of the bishop of Moulin, *Gobet*, the new bishop of Paris, with his Grand Vicars and three other revolutionary bishops, came to the hall of legislators, and there abdicated christianity in form. They begged pardon of the injured nation for having so long kept them in the dark, by duping them into a belief of the divinity of an *Impostor*, whose

religion they now threw off with abhorrence, resolved in future to acknowledge no other deity than *Reason* alone!

It was not more than four days after this that a Pagan festival was held in the Cathedral Church of Paris. A woman named Memoro, the wife of another man, but the strumpet of the vile Hebert, *alias* Father du Chêne, was dressed up as the *Goddess of Reason*. Her throne was of green turf; an altar was erected at some distance, on which the priests burnt incense, while the legislators and the brutified Parisian herd were prostrated before the *Goddess of Reason, alias* Memoro, *alias* du Chêne.

About this epoch appeared the Paganism republican calendar, with a decree ordering its adoption. This was intended to root from the poor tyrannized people the very memory of religion; to dry up the only source of comfort they had left. They had been robbed of all they possessed in this world, and their inexorable tyrants wished to rob them of every hope in the next. Some say that this calendar itself was composed by an apostate priest, others; that it was the work of a writer of farces named Des Moulins.

It is true, the last mentioned acts, the consummation of the most horrid blasphemy that ever man was witness of, took place under the Convention: but, what were they more than a necessary consequence of the measures of the Constituent Assembly? Nay, the leaders in that Assembly boasted, when they had obtained the decree against the non-juring priests, that they had tricked the people out of their religion, before they perceived it. Nor is there at this time one of those who voted for that decree, who will not tell you, that Christianity is a farce, fit only for the amusement of old folks, and that he rejoices in its abolition in France. This is not mere surmise.

Indeed, that their successors have only fulfilled their wishes, in this respect, there can be no doubt, if any judgement of the wishes of men is to be formed from their principles, their words, and their actions. Who,

I ask, that wished to preserve religion, would have passed a decree for the expulsion of every priest that refused to forswear himself? Who, that did not wish to destroy religion, would have passed a decree for committing it to the care of apostates? Was it not clear, that such men would stick at nothing? That, at the nod of their masters, they would at any time be ready to blaspheme the God they pretended to adore? On the contrary, the Assembly knew, that there was no hope of their system taking root while the ancient clergy remained in their cures. Among men, who gave up their all, and exposed themselves to almost certain death, rather than falsify their faith, they could not hope to find a *Gobet*. They could not hope to find supple villains that would voluntarily depose the emblems of their religion on the altar of a strumpet, and confess themselves to have been the crafty ministers of an *arch impostor*.—

The oath tendered to the clergy was the touch-stone; it was to prove them; to know whom the Assembly could depend on for the accomplishment of their projects, and whom they could not depend on. The enforcing of the oath was the last blow to public religion in France, and therefore the destruction of that religion, with all its immoral and murderous consequences, is due to the Constituent Assembly, and to them alone. It is as nonsensical as unjust to accuse this or that faction, or even the Convention itself, of exchanging Christianity for a system of Paganism; infidels who adore an idol are as good as infidels who adore none; and where is the difference, whether the adored idol be Jean Jacques Rousseau or Madame Memoro? An adulteress is as good a goddess as an adulterer is a god at any time.

Let the reader look back, and he will easily trace all the horrors of the French Revolution to the decrees of the Constituent Assembly. It was they that rent the government to pieces; it was they that first broached the destructive doctrine of equality; it was they that destroyed all ideas of private property; and finally, it was they that rendered the people hardened, by effacing from their mind every

principle of the only religion capable of keeping mankind within the bounds of justice and humanity. Look also at their particular actions, and you will see them breaking their oaths to their constituents, and to their king; you will see their agents driving people from their estates, beating and killing them; you will see them surrounded with a set of hireling writers and assassins, employed to degrade and murder peaceable people attached to the religion of their forefathers; and you will see them not only pardoning murderers, in spite of their poor humiliated monarch, but even receiving the assassins at their bar, covering them with applauses, and instituting festivals in their honour. What have the members of the Convention and their agents done more than this? They have murdered in greater numbers. True; but what have numbers to do with the matter? The principle on which those murders were committed was ever the same: it was more or less active, as occasion required. The wants of the Convention were more pressing than those of the Constituent Assembly. The Assembly were not driven to the expedient of *requisitions*, nor was the hour yet arrived for the promulgation of the paganish calendar. Consequently they met with less opposition, and therefore less murders were necessary; but, had they continued their sittings to this day, the devastation of every kind would have been the same that it has been.

THE WHOLE HISTORY of the FRENCH REVOLUTION presents us with nothing but a regular progress in ROBBERY and MURDER. The first Assembly, for instance, begin by flattering the mob, wheedling their king out of his title and his power; they then set him at defiance, proscribe or put to death his friends; and then shut him up in his palace, as a wild beast in a cage. The second Assembly send a gang of ruffians to insult and revile him, and then they hurl him from his throne. The third Assembly cut his throat. What is there in all this but a regular and natural progression from bad to worse. And so with the rest of their abominable actions.

To throw the blame on the successors of the first despotic Assembly is such a perversion of reason, such an abandonment of truth, that no man, who has a single grain of sense, can hear of with patience. As well might we ascribe all the murders committed at Nantz to the under cut-throats, by whom they were perpetrated, and not to the Convention by whose order, and under whose protection, these cut-throats acted. The Constituent Assembly knew the consequences of their decrees, as well as Foucault [See page 52.] knew the consequence of his order for throwing forty women from the cliff Pierre-moine into the sea; and it is full as ridiculous to hear them pretend, that they did not wish those consequences to follow, as it would be to hear Foucault pretend, that he did not wish the forty women should be drowned. True, the Convention are guilty of every crime under heaven: assassins and blasphemers must ever merit detestation and abhorrence, from whatever motive they may act, or by whomsoever taught and instigated; but still the pre-eminence in infamy is due to their teachers and instigators: the Convention is, in relation to the Constituent Assembly, what the ignorant desperate bravo is in relation to his crafty and sculking employer.

Before I conclude, it may not be improper, as I have hitherto spoken of the Constituent Assembly in a general way, to make some distinctions with respect to the persons who composed it. I am very far from holding them all up as objects of abhorrence, or even of censure. There were many, very many, men of great wisdom and virtue, who were elected to the States-General, and even who joined the Assembly, after it assumed the epithet *National*. It would be the height of injustice to reproach these men with the consequences of measures, which they opposed with such uncommon eloquence and courage. History will make honourable mention of their names, when the epitome I have here attempted will be lost and forgotten. Suffice it then to say, that the weight of our censure, of the censure of all just and good men, ought to fall on these licentious politicians and infidel philosophers alone,

who sanctioned the decree for the annihilation of property and religion.

Here, too, we ought to divest ourselves of every thing of a personal or party nature, and direct our abhorrence to principles alone. As to the actors, they have, in general, already expiated their wickedness or folly by the loss of their lives. We have seen the atheist Condorcet obliged to fly in disguise from the capital, the inhabitants of which he had corrupted, and by whom he had been adored as the great luminary of the age: we have seen him assume the garb and the supplicating tone of a common beggar, lurking in the lanes and woods, like a houseless thief, and, at last, literally dying in a ditch, leaving his carcase a prey to the fowls of the air, and his memory as a lesson to future apostles of anarchy and blasphemy. Scores, not to say hundreds, of his coadjutors have shared a fate little different from his own; and those who have not, have little reason to congratulate themselves on their escape. The tornado they have raised for the destruction of others, has swept them from the seat of their tyranny, and scattered them over every corner of the earth. Those haughty usurpers, who refused the precedence to the successors of Charlemagne, are now obliged to yield it to a peasant or a porter. They who decreed, that the "Folding doors of the Louvre should fly open at their approach," are now glad to lift the latch of a wicket, and bend their heads beneath the thatch of a cabin. And, what language can express the vexation, the anguish, the cutting reflections, that must be the companions of their obscurity! When they look back on their distracted country, when they behold the widows, the orphans, the thousands and hundreds of thousands of murdered victims, that it presents; when they behold the frantic people, carrying the dagger to the hearts of their parents, nay, digging their forefathers from their graves, and throwing their ashes to the winds; when they behold all this, and reflect that it is the work of their own hands, well might they call on the hills to hide them. The torments of such an existence who can bear? Next to

the wrath of heaven, the malediction of one's country is surely the most tremendous and insupportable.

Now what is the advantage we ought to derive from the awful example before us?—It ought to produce in us a watchfulness, and a steady resolution to oppose the advances of disorganizing and infidel principles. I am aware that it will be said by some, that all fear of the progress of these principles is imaginary; but, constant observation assures me, that it is but too well founded.

Shall we say that these things never can take place among us? Because we have hitherto preserved the character of a pacific and humane people, shall we set danger at defiance? Though we are not Frenchmen, we are men as well as they, and consequently are liable to be misled, and even be sunk to the lowest degree of brutality, as they have been. They, too, had an amiable character: what character have they now? *The same principles brought into action among us would produce the same degradation.*

There are few actions of the French revolutionists, but have not been palliated and excused in our public papers,* and many of them in our public assemblies. Anarchy has its open advocates. How many numerous companies have issued, under the form of toasts, sentiments offensive to humanity and disgraceful to our national character? If drunken men, as is usually the case, speak from the bottom of their hearts, what quarter should we have to expect from wretches like these?

I know the reader will start back with horror. His heart will tell him that it is impossible. But, once more,

* It is a truth that no one will deny, that the opposition newspapers of this country have become its scourge. I speak with a few exceptions. It is said that they enlighten the people; but their light is like the torch of an incendiary, and the one has the same destructive effect on the mind as the other has on matter. The whole study of the editors of the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Morning Post*, and the *Courier*, seems to be to deceive and confound. One would almost think they were hired by the French Directors to turn the brains and corrupt the hearts of their readers.

let him look at the example before us. The man who, in 1788, should have predicted the fate of the last humane and truly patriotic Louis, would have been treated as a wretch or a madman.

I am fully convinced, that the monarch and monarchy of Great Britain are as dear, and dearer to all good men than they ever were; but of what consequence is our affection for our sovereign, unless we are prepared to make every effort to defeat the projects of his enemies. Sure am I, that if the friends of virtue and order will only shew the same zeal in the cause of their country as the enemies of both have done in the cause of France, we shall have nothing to apprehend from a hardened and impious faction; which, however small may be its numbers, if not timely and firmly opposed, may one day render the annals of Great Britain as disgraceful as those of the French Revolution.

FINIS.

*In a few Days will be published, Price 6d. or
twelve for 4s. 6d.*

THE BLOODY BUOY, Abridged.

Thrown out as a WARNING TO BRITONS: containing a faithful Relation of a multitude of Acts of horrid Barbarity, such as the Eye never witnessed, the Tongue never expressed, or the Imagination conceived, until the Commencement of the FRENCH REVOLUTION.

